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## COOKS WITH V CORPS' 22ND SIGNAL BRIGADE BRING FOOD, MORALE BOOST TO DEPLOYED COMRADES

By Pfc. Michael Howard

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**GRAFENWOEHR TRAINING AREA, Germany** – "I don't really do MREs," said Sgt. 1st Class Davis Joseph, the 22nd Signal Brigade's senior strength management supervisor, "so having the [dining facility] has been a good thing. Since I've been in the field, the chow has been really good. The burgers are better than Burger King."



PFC MICHAEL HOWARD

Sgt. 1st Class Leander Prather, NCO in charge of the dining facility serving Soldiers of V Corps' 22nd Signal Brigade training at Grafenwoehr, Germany (left), and Spc. Gary Poole, a brigade food service specialist, steam mixed vegetables and chicken in the facility's kitchen. "This is the best dining facility in Germany," bragged Prather.

During their recent training here, cooks from the brigade's 440th and 32nd Signal Battalions, as well as the brigade Headquarters Company, teamed up to provide the 22nd's Soldiers with home-style cooking and a sizable morale boost during their recent deployment.

"Being in a field environment can be stressful, and everyone enjoys the chance to relax and

get a home-cooked meal," said Sgt. Latisha D. Wilson, a food service specialist with the 22nd Signal Brigade. "I get complements every day. 'The food was great.' I've had nothing but great complements so far."

Although most diners appreciate the cooks' efforts, there are a few who don't understand that providing an entire deployed brigade with hot meals every day is harder than it looks, said Spc. Helena M. Buschke, another brigade food service specialist.

"Sometimes Soldiers don't understand that there are rules and regulations that we have to follow. They think we just come here and cook-- which is somewhat true -- but there's more to it than that. We work holidays, weekends, nights ... it's hard if you have a family, but you know that you're providing essentials to other people who don't have them, and that makes you feel a lot better. It takes a lot of personnel and a lot of support. It takes a lot of dedication, and you've got to like your job," said Buschke.

Fortunately, Wilson says, the cooks not only love and excel at their jobs, they are always willing to go the extra mile for their deployed Soldiers.

"We put a lot of effort and time into decorating and setting up, and feeding the Soldiers as well as we possibly can. Most DFACs in the field will only give you the mandatory one meat, one starch, and one vegetable. We provide Soldiers with a choice between at least three meats, two vegetables, and two starches. We're happy to take the time to provide Soldiers with the choices and the options they need to keep happy and well fed," said Wilson.

"We're like a family. We're close, and we have fun together," added Buschke.

